

# Highlands Trail Event <sup>HC Democrat</sup> Saturday In Riegelsville <sup>5/14/09</sup>

RIEGELSVILLE, Pa. — The 150-mile Highlands Trail is nearly complete from Storm King Mountain on the Hudson River to Riegelsville on the Delaware. But the Appalachian Mountain Club isn't waiting for a similar group, the New York/New Jersey Trail Conference, to finish the last few miles through Hunterdon County this summer.

The AMC will hold a welcoming ceremony on Saturday,

launching its effort to create a 100-mile interlocking network of trails in Pennsylvania that will ultimately allow hikers to traverse woods, fields and parkland through 13 counties and 1.5 million acres of that state's section of the federal Highlands area.

According to AMC Mid-Atlantic Planner Jennifer Heisey, the celebration begins at noon at the foot of the Pennsylvania end of the Riegelsville Bridge, across the Delaware River from Warren County's Route 627 (Riegelsville-Warren Glen Road). After a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the bridge, the celebration moves to Borough Park for refreshments, hikes in Mariton Wildlife Sanctuary, bike rides along the canal tow path, and kayak and canoe paddling demonstrations on the Delaware River.

Hunterdon County parks staffer Michael Helbig will lead a 20-mile, two-day hike along Hunterdon's mostly complete Highlands Trail. The hikers will camp out overnight on private land and finish Sunday at Spruce Run Reservoir in Union Township.

This fall, according to Brenda Holzinger of the Trail Conference, that organization will host its own celebration to mark the completion of the nearly 90 miles of the trail that snakes through 850,000 acres of the federal Highlands Area in New Jersey. When complete, the entire Highlands Trail will enable a hiker to trek from central Pennsylvania deep into Connecticut.

For details on Saturday's events, call (610) 868-6906. To join the Hunterdon overnight backpacking hike, call 343-8374.